

RURAL DISTRICT OF CASTLE WARD,
NORTHUMBERLAND.

Annual Report of the Medical Officer
of Health.

To

THE RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL OF CASTLE WARD.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

In presenting to you my Annual Report on the Health and Sanitary state of your district, I shall endeavour to follow the order of former years.

The estimated population to the middle of June, 1898, is 9463·725.

Area of district in acres, 85,219.

147 deaths were registered during the year, giving a death-rate of 15·05 per 1,000 per annum.

219 births were registered, giving a birth-rate of 23·1 per 1,000 per annum.

Natural increase of the population, 72. Of the deaths, 62 were under 5 years of age, and 42 were over 65. Eleven were recorded from the seven principal zymotic diseases, and calculated on the same population gives a death-rate of 1·1 per 1,000 per annum.

Of the total number of deaths,

33 were registered during the 1st quarter.			
41	do.	do.	2nd do.
34	do.	do.	3rd do.
39	do.	do.	4th do.

I visited all cases of notifiable disease, and gave the necessary instructions and assistance. Fumigation was superintended by one of your officials. There being no disinfectors heavy articles of furniture were difficult to deal with.

The number of cases of infectious disease reported to me during the years 1892-3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 respectively were 225, 70, 60, 43, 43, 24, and 31. A committee was appointed in the autumn to select a suitable ambulance, disinfectors, and hospital, but, owing to the illness of one of the members, its meeting has been postponed.

SMALL-POX.—An outbreak of this disease occurred at Matfen Burnside, in the house of a farmer named Urwin. I was first made aware of the existence of the disease by the receipt of a telegram from the medical attendant at this house on the first of June. I immediately telegraphed to Newcastle-on-Tyne for lymph, also to your inspector and to Dr. Sibbit, to meet me there that afternoon. On visiting the house I found that a trained nurse had been installed there for a few days, and that the house, excepting two cottages near at hand, was practically isolated, and would

serve as an hospital, six of the inmates having been ill. I gave instructions to the trained nurse, both verbal and written, respecting isolation and disinfection, at the same time supplying some disinfectants. On enquiring of Mr. Urwin as to the cause of the disease, he informed me that he was the first to take it; that he had been in Newcastle-on-Tyne and Hexham on the 19th April, and that he felt unwell fourteen days afterwards, but had never been in bed, and went about his work as usual. On the 3rd June, having got a supply of lymph, I again visited the house and cottages in company with Dr. Sibbit, and had all persons at the place vaccinated. Vaccination was also continued in the village of Matfen and the surrounding neighbourhood. On this day a farm servant was vaccinated at the farmhouse, he being the only one there unattacked; he showed symptoms of the disease seven days afterwards, so that he would probably have had small-pox in his system for seven days preceding the vaccination, consequently it would have been done too late. This man died. The last case reported to me was Miss Steele, a cousin of Urwin's, who had clandestinely frequently visited the house. She was living at Matfen village, and was removed to Urwin's house. The day after she was notified, and her house disinfected. Owing to the distance of Matfen from my house (ten miles) communication was not easy. On July 7th each room in Urwin's house was fumigated by your officials, all linen having been either washed or destroyed, and so ended what was to your officials an anxious time.

WHOOPIING COUGH.—This disease is non-notifiable. There has been no epidemic to my knowledge.

MEASLES.—Another non-notifiable disease was prevalent in the Stannington district in the month of July; the school was closed, and the usual precautions taken. Measles in an epidemic form prevailed at Heddon in March, the school being closed owing to absentees. There was no other outbreak in the district of a serious nature to my knowledge.

SCARLET FEVER.—Eight cases of this disease were reported to me, 1 at Newburn, 4 at North Gosforth, and 3 at Ponteland; the Gosforth cases spread apparently from the village of that name. The cases at Dinnington were single and isolated, and could not be traced to any cases in the neighbourhood.

CROUP AND TYPHUS FEVER.—Two cases of croup occurred, both under two years of age; typhus as usual was not recorded.

ENTERIC OR TYPHOID FEVER.—Thirteen cases were notified, 10 having occurred at Dinnington Colliery or the immediate neighbourhood at the termination of the long-continued drought last September. The cases, generally speaking, all commenced with diarrhœa, there being a wide-spread and severe epidemic of this disease prevalent at the time. The water used at the Colliery is obtained from the Newcastle and Gateshead Water Company. The milk was principally obtained from a local dairyman, who had no illness in his house and who was supplied with the same water. I visited the Colliery immediately on receiving the first notification, and suggested to your inspector that the sewers should be disinfected and flushed. I had no means of ascertaining the state of the sewers as the traps were bolted down. I suggested that the sewers should be examined. At the time the fever broke out the ashpits at the Colliery were mostly full to overflowing, and there was some difference of opinion between the men and owners as to whose duty it was to cleanse them. There are by-laws for the cleansing of such. At Brenkley, Heddon, and other places where fever prevailed, recommendations have been made.

DIARRHŒA.—Three deaths were due to this disease in children under one year, due probably to errors of diet.

There is no case of infectious disease in your district, as the year terminates. All cases notified to me have been visited during the year, and supplied with disinfectants.

Reports made by me during the year 1898, and the action taken on such reports.

BRENKLEY COTTAGE requires to be enlarged, to have the clay removed from the back, and to be supplied with a sink as well as drinking water. The cottage has been enlarged.

As required by your authority, I reported on the Ponteland water supply, and the relative advantages of getting water from a point west of the village (the Lady Well) or from Darras Hall.

KIRKLEY NORTH LODGE.—The ditch into which the sewer discharges requires cleansing. This has been done.

BELL VILLA (Mr. Chisholm's house).—The cesspit near this house requires removal.

STANNINGTON.—West end ditch requires cleansing.

DUDDO HILL DAIRY FARM.—I visited and reported on this place.

COLDCOTES WEST DAIRY FARM.—A supply of water has been provided for this place.

BOLAM TILERY Sewage is discharged on to the roadside, causing a nuisance.

BOLAM WHITE HOUSE.—Liquid manure requires to be diverted from the back of the dwelling house.

CLICKEMIN COTTAGE.—Ashpit, sink, and better roof required.

SHINEY ROW, KENTON.—11 cottages reported as unfit for habitation. It was proposed, seconded, and carried that a closing order be applied for.

DINNINGTON VILLAGE.—Water supply negotiations are in progress.

Not much progress has been made with the sewerage schemes for the villages of Ponteland, Dinnington, or Stamfordham since my last report, and I might say with reference to Ponteland that the development of the new sewage purification processes is anxiously awaited as the village will in the near future have a railway station.

I remain, Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

G. H. FITZGERALD, M.D.,

Medical Officer of Health

January, 1899.

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NORTHUMBERLAND.

ANNUAL REPORT

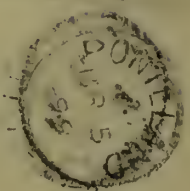
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FOR THE YEAR 1898.

January, 1899.

W. & S. B. NEWBOLD, L.



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